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THE PURPOSE OF ART IN LIFE

Why have an art museum? Has it a place in this practical, matter-of-fact, twentieth century life of ours? Is it worth while for the city to appropriate thousands of dollars every year for its maintenance? What is gained by it? Is it not a useless expenditure?

These questions can be answered only by asking what life is for. If we will concede that life is for the development and perfecting of the individual, and that anything that tends to widen our field of knowledge and our susceptibility to impressions tends toward hastening this development, then we must grant that art has a place in life. For the art of living is the finest of all arts, and he lives most who responds to the greatest variety of stimuli with the deepest and most intense reaction.

If we will trace the growth of man from his earliest stages up to the present time we will find that at first he reacted only to the most simple stimuli: heat and cold, hunger and fear. He was practically without emotions, excepting the most primitive, and had no desire to be surrounded by beautiful things. In the animal kingdom it is even harder to find traces of emotion. Who can imagine a cow thrilling at a beautiful sunset? As man evolves in the scale we find a gradually awakening sense of beauty, and as far back as the quaternary period we see traces

of a love of symmetry and decoration in the carved daggers, harpoons, and stillets, and the cleverly fashioned reindeer horns and bones covered with reliefs and drawings.

As man's love of beauty has been one of the indexes to his progress through the centuries, so today he among us who is the most highly evolved, has the strongest sense of and appreciation for the beautiful. Greece owed the high place she holds in the world's civilization to her love of beauty and the expression she gave to it in every phase of life.

That education is most effective which awakens in the child this love of beauty and the desire to be surrounded by it: beautiful music, beautiful literature, beautiful pictures, to the end that life itself may be richer and more beautiful. Art should be, first of all, then, for the child. Every child has an inalienable right to the understanding of beautiful objects and to the inspiration which that understanding gives.

The thing that differentiates art from artisanship is that the function of artisanship is to satisfy some immediate need, whereas art is fulfilling its greatest mission in evoking an emotion, whether of admiration, curiosity, or pleasure. For it is as necessary for us to grow emotionally as it is physically or mentally, and he is the well-rounded man who is

strong in his body, vibrant in his emotions, and clear-thinking and well-balanced in his mentality. Art comes to us to give the highest quality to our moments as they pass, that we may have the highest possible number of pulsations in the short span of years we are given to live. For—

“We count time in heart throbs;
Not in figures on the dial.”

The purpose of the museum, then, is to gather together masterpieces of art in order that the people may have an opportunity to see and study them, that the love of the beautiful may grow in them and their lives become fuller and richer, and that this appreciation of the beautiful may result in the final appreciation of the Ideal Beauty.

J. W.

MICHIGAN ARTISTS' EXHIBITION

The Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Michigan Artists, under the management of the Scarab Club, will be held in galleries III and IV from December 1 to December 31, opening with a reception on Wednesday evening, December 1. All works intended for the exhibition must be delivered at the Museum not later than November 20, as the jury will meet during that week. A number of prizes will be awarded as follows:

The Scarab Club Gold Medal contributed by Mr. Frederic H. Zeigen for the most important contribution to the success of the exhibition.

The Detroit Museum of Art

Founders Society first prize of \$100, second prize of \$50, and third prize of \$25 for the three best pictures by resident Michigan artists.

The Marvin Preston prize of \$100 for the best oil painting by a member of the Scarab Club made since January 1, 1920.

The Frank Scott Clark prize of \$50 for the best painting of a head in oil.

In addition to these prizes, the Detroit Institute of Arts has appropriated a fund of \$300 to be used at the option of the Arts Commission for the purchase of works of art by resident Michigan artists.

SCHEDULE OF EXHIBITIONS

November—Exhibition of Paintings, Tapestries and Chinese Porcelains.
Exhibition of Paintings by Martha Walter.

December—Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Michigan Artists under the auspices of the Scarab Club.

Exhibition of Etchings by Lester G. Hornby.

Exhibition of Hand Wrought Iron by Thomas Googerty.

Exhibition of Wood Carvings, “Spirits of the Woods,” by Charles Haag.